

Remarks

The Office Action rejects Claims 1-22 and 39-42 and objects to Claims 23-38 as containing allowable subject matter, but depending from claims that are not allowable. Solely to facilitate prosecution on the merits and without acquiescence in the Examiner's rejections, and without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant cancels Claims 1-42 and presents new Claims 43-69. Applicant reserves its right to pursue the canceled subject matter in a related application. New Claims 43-69 represent Claims 23-38 rewritten as a new independent claim and associated dependent claims. Support for the claim amendments may be found throughout the specification as filed. Claims 43-69 are now pending.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejects Claims 1-7, 10-12, 21-22 and 39-42 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and Claims 8-9, 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Applicant has canceled Claims 1-42, rendering the rejections moot.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter with respect to Claims 23-38 (if re-written in independent form). Accordingly, Applicant presents new Claims 43-69, which represent Claims 23-38 re-written as suggested by the Examiner. In particular, new Claim 43 is substantially similar to former Claim 24 re-written in independent form. The remainder of the new claims are substantially similar to the original dependent claims, now all depending from allowable independent claim 43.

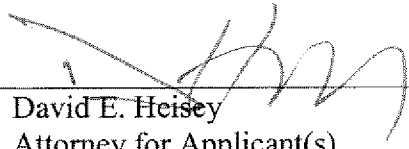
In view of the above, and in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, Applicant respectfully requests prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, allowance of Claims 43-69 is solicited. If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this and concurrent replies to charge payment (or credit any overpayment) to Deposit Account No. 50-4562 for any additional required fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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